

# The NORTH QUEENSLAND NATURALIST CAIRNS

Journal of

NORTH QUEENSLAND NATURALISTS CLUB  
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*Founder President: The late Dr. HUGO FLECKER*  
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OBJECTS: The furtherance of the study of the various branches of Natural History and the preservation of our heritage of indigenous fauna and flora.

MEETINGS: Second Tuesday of each month at Cairns Education Centre, Cnr. Morehead and Lazarus Sts., Bungalow, 8.00 p.m.

FIELDS DAYS: Sunday before meeting. Notice of place and time given in "Cairns Post".

SUBSCRIPTIONS: (Due September 30th)	\$8.00
City and Suburban Members	
Country Members	\$5.00
Pensioner and Junior Members	\$5.00

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president:	Mr Les. Francis
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hon. treasurer:	Mrs D. Magarry
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Each author is responsible for the facts and opinions expressed in his or her article

Please note, Edition 188 preceded 187.

Carellia brachiata common name - Forest Mangrove

by Dawn Magarry

This native tree belongs to the Rhizophoraceae family. The best specimen in our garden is some 5 metres high, though others which have been crowded in our rainforest patch have shot up to about 20 metres.

The foliage is fairly dense with glossy dark green leaves and rough corky bark on trunk and branches. The trees flowered in early August with thick clusters of small white flowers. By early October these had developed into small green fruit about 1 cm. in diameter. The berries gradually turned from green to red and then black.

During the day these provided a feast for Fig Birds, Rainbow Lorikeets, Torres Strait Pigeons, Shining Starlings and even Indian Mynahs. At night by torch light, we found Little Red Flying Foxes feeding on the berries.

A nurseryman acquaintance told us that the tree would make a very attractive specimen for home gardens.

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A PERSONAL VIEW OF BIRD WEEK ON CAPE YORK by Margaret Vale.

Cape York Wilderness Lodge Jan 7-15 1988

The flight by Air Queensland Fokker Friendship from Cairns was spectacular. We flew over Port Douglas, Cooktown, Princess Charlotte Bay with all its coral reefs, and Iron Range. The sands of Shelburne Bay are certainly extensive.

Bamaga airport is an expanse of red tarmac and a shed with a few relics of the history of the area. The conveniences are best left undescribed. The American forces built up the runway and surroundings for approximately one year during the war. There are many parking bays for bombers along the approach roads and there are rusting 44 gallon fuel drums every where. Australian forces took over the airfield in 1942. One particularly poignant reminder of the time is the wreck of a DC3 transport plane nearby on the road to the Jardine River. Many tales exist of how it came to grief. Apparently it had a cargo of meat which shifted, the pilot lost control, it clipped a tree and the left wing came off. Bits of the plane, including the wing, litter the paddock which has now been made into a memorial for the dead airmen. The plane looks as if it crashed last week as it is made out of aluminium and won't rust. There is even rubber on the tires after 43 years of monsoonal rain and decay in the jungle.

On the 30 km drive to the Lodge along a surprisingly good dirt road we saw and heard many blue-winged kookaburras. At Lockerbie Scrub, amidst a profusion of mango trees are the remains of one of Frank Jardine's stations. We picked up Gordon and Erina Beruldsen and Peter and Raoul Slater who had been casing the rainforest during the morning.

The approach to Cape Wilderness Lodge is marvellous. You don't know you are anywhere near it until you round a corner and suddenly there is the camping ground and staff quarters. Another half kilometer and there is the gate of the lodge. Walk 50 meters away from it in any direction and you cannot see any buildings at all. The architects and builders have achieved a remarkable blend with the environment. You really feel remote, as if you have entered a true wilderness. I sincerely hope that the Lodge can be preserved in its present form and spirit.

After check formalities were complete Carol Wingate and I, who were the early arrivals, had lunch with the rest of the advance party as well as Klaus Uhlenhut, the Lodge's wonderful resident naturalist. Wilderness Lodge is known for the high standard of its food - lots of salads, plenty of vegetables and fruit, and of course fish, some of which is caught locally by the staff.

The accommodation consists of 6 clusters of 4 self-contained units. The most remarkable feature for comfort is the walls which are entirely aluminium louvre windows with insect screens outside. You can close them for privacy or have them wide open for ventilation, as we did most of the time.

Gordon Beruldsen took us on a walk to the local swamp, where we saw little but we did get our boots very muddy and worn in. Raoul Slater trudged past us with his amazing camera equipment on the way to a satisfying afternoon's photography in the hide for the fawn-breasted bower-bird.

On Friday morning we did some reconnoitering with Gordon and Erina at the dam site from where the lodge gets its water. It is in the middle of rain forest and the Lodge has constructed a hide at the top of a large 30 meter tree so you can be up there in the canopy with the rain forest birds instead of having to recover from neckache each evening. During the week this hide was christened the Taj Mahal, but you must have a strong stomach for heights to venture up there.

Buff-breasted paradise kingfishers are almost as common as sparrows around there, and the call of the yellow oriole is pervasive. While hunting up a yellow-billed kingfisher, we suddenly noticed Gordon's language become more colourful. He had come upon a yellow-legged flycatcher building a nest. It was the third recorded sighting of such a nest in Australia. What a good omen for the week!

We also made the first of our fairly disappointing searches for a red-bellied pitta. These are the most aggravating birds alive. You trace their mournful call to a nearby tree, then suddenly there is a flash of grey and red. The next time you hear the call it is about 3 ridges away. Many people did get good views of the pitta during the week. Some individuals even seemed to attract it.

However for me the 5 second glimpse I got later in the week, after an hour and half of mosquito dive-bombing, did not make me feel any less frustrated by this rare bird.

Gordon showed us pitta nests in the buttress roots of tall rainforest trees, as well as the delicate nest of the frilled flycatcher which is hung between two small dangling vines. On

the 5 kilometer route march back to the Lodge in the blazing midday sun we heard the single note chord of the trumpet manucode, then saw one fly. Apparently these birds always nest near black butcherbirds and use them for protection. In the same patch of rainforest there were constant "wolf whistles" from the magnificent riflebird.

The remaining 35 birdwatchers arrived during the afternoon, some having seen a black-breasted buzzard and a palm cockatoo on the way. That night at yet another sumptuous dinner, we were visited by an orange-footed scrub-fowl, lovingly dubbed Chuck the Chook by the staff. Chuck has a particularly endearing habit of shovelling leaves back onto the newly swept path. Perhaps some retraining is needed here to get him to shovel off the path instead.

Also present at dinner was a grey bandicoot with spiky fur who survived an encounter with a scrub python in the dining room a few months before. Lastly there was the quoll, reminiscent of the Tasmanian devil and with a very long thin tail.

Later in the evening, on top of the telephone aerial, there perched barking owls. Their woop woop calls were to keep us awake during the week, just as if a neighbour's dog was barking.

Saturday was the first official trip out. Our leader for the morning was Peter Slater and we went to the Lockerbie Scrub rainforest. Peter showed us the nest and perch of a yellow-billed kingfisher, but the bird, although trilling quite close, was reluctant to appear. However we were lucky to get an extremely good view of a cuscus feeding by day high in the canopy. His red eyes matched the red berries he was slowly stuffing into his mouth as he surveyed us from on high.

Further down the road we got a fleeting glimpse of a northern scrub-robin when it was called up with a tape. We also had a good view of the yellow-billed kingfisher high on a branch just here. Many Torres Strait pigeons flew noisily through the canopy and I caught a glimpse of a female lovely wren.

That evening Klaus showed us his "3rd best" slides. They were magic! He has a wonderful shot of a Palm Cockatoo with a stick in its hand, drumming out its territory. Another memorable shot is of the fawn-breasted bower-bird displaying the back of its head to its mate in the bower. I hope that some day a publisher will bring out a book of Klaus's material. His slides are superb.

Not much was seen when Lloyd Nielsen lead a night walk in search of a marbled frogmouth. However half way along the track to the camping ground, something flew out of the grass and firmly attached itself to Lloyd's shorts. It was a young Queensland tube-nosed bat. It was grey and pink and very clingy. It had a mouse-like face and enormous nostrils. Lesley Beaton had to peel it off Lloyd then peel it off herself to get it back into the scrub.

On Sunday we boarded runabouts and motored past Frangipanny Beach to Crocodile Creek. Unfortunately a crocodile was shot here a few months back by some 4WD campers who could not be prosecuted because they did not attempt to remove the carcass. However all their hunting gear was confiscated by the police.



Up the creek there were excellent views of the satin flycatcher. A purple-crowned pigeon was making a nest and flew back and forth just in front of our boat several times. The red-headed honey-eater and little kingfisher dashed to and fro across the river and the brush cuckoo called from high in the tree.

That afternoon I came back along the beach to the hide for the fawn-breasted bower-bird. We had hardly crept in and assumed our seats when the male bird arrived with another twig for his construction. He seems to enter the back of the bower, carefully place what he has brought, then choose something to remove and bring it out the front. The bower has a lot of large green berries on the floor. Observers have said that the bird paints the inside of its bower red; however Michael Seyfort, who observed the bird over a long period, said that he selects rusty red twigs and brings them to the bower for decoration. What a fussy builder this bird is, especially when you compare this structure to some of the pigeon nests we saw.

Lloyd took us to Roma Flats on Monday where we chased a magnificent riflebird around the forest for an hour. We examined some multil-holed shining starling nests which had fallen to the ground, some with their light blue eggs still intact. We had good views of the chestnut-breasted cuckoo, with its call so similar to that of the yellow-billed kingfisher. Further down the road were 2 barking owls, a frilled flycatcher and, at last, a palm cockatoo. I was impressed by how big and grey it was. We had good views of its crest and red cheeks. This is a bird which could do with a spot of Rld as apparently it is hounded by mosquitos on these red patches.

That afternoon the monsoonal rains hit us. I saw the southern end of the monsoon trough from the beach. On the horizon were banks of grey cumulus clouds stretching high into the sky. Underneath were seven or eight showers of rain stretching right across the horizon. Although we had plenty of rain during the week, mainly at night, neither schedule nor transport were disrupted.

Klaus showed us more slides that night including tree snakes, frogs, the bower-bird and the noisy pitta. He has yet to take a good shot of the red-bellied pitta.

Tuesday proved to be the most memorable day of my week. I nearly overslept and missed the 5.15 am lift to the riflebird bower. One must walk in during darkness and be prepared to sit in cramped conditions for hours and hours. The day before, several people had left the hide after 2 hours without a sighting. I was determined to stay till lunchtime if there was the faintest glimmer of hope.

It was very wet at the hide position. The sun rose and with it the buff-breasted paradise kingfishers and yellow orioles. One oriole was sitting on a nest just above our hide. At about 7.30 we had to take a break and stretch our legs outside the hide. We were talking quietly amongst ourselves when suddenly there was a slow wolf whistle just above our heads. We looked at each other and shot back into the hide. No wonder people think birdwatchers are a strange race! By 8.30 there was still no sighting, so 2 members decided to leave the hide. A third was putting a limit on the time she would be prepared to sit it out.

At 9.15 we had our binoculars trained on a vociferous kingfisher when there was a sudden rush of wings. The riflebird had arrived on the perch just where Klaus had said he would be! We were thrilled. For the next 25 minutes he preened meticulously, at one stage sticking his bill right through his wing feathers. We could see the green and blue metallic colours of his neck easily. This must be for a great performance we thought. At 9.40 suddenly he turned his back to us, threw open his wings like a flasher does his raincoat, and danced backwards down the bough jerking his head from side to side like a disco dancer. This magnificent performance lasted for 10 seconds then he immediately flew to the low scrub.

Within 10 minutes he was back, searching around for grubs on the ground underneath the perch. After flying to the perch for even more preening he flew off. We thought we had been extremely lucky. It surely must be a highly significant moment in any birdo's life to see such a wonderful display.

It was a little hard to come down to earth, as it were, and join the others at the dam, hunting chestnut-breasted cuckoos, leaden flycatchers and Erina's bird, the Papuan frogmouth on the nest.

Later that afternoon, 4 of us flew to Thursday Island on the Lodge's helicopter. On the way over we flew very high and could see the gold diggings and airport on Horn Island. Prince of Wales Island, the largest in the Torres Strait, seems to be sparsely inhabited. We landed on the town's one beach, much to the interest of the locals.

After a brief walk into town past the hospital, we looked at the church which is a memorial for the Quetta shipwreck disaster off St. Adolphus Island in the late 19th century. It has lovely stained glass windows and many souvenirs of the ship. We then hired a taxi to tour the island, visiting the old quarantine station, the cemetery where more than 700 Japanese pearl divers are buried - their graves marked by white posts covered in Japanese writing.

We also saw the high school and some gun emplacements on Green Hill which were built to fend off the Russians last century. From Green Hill you could see across to Goode Island where the Japanese have a cultured pearl farm. Many others were visible, including Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday Islands.

There is a memorable pub on T.I. which has walls full of murals. The most memorable of these is a large picture of the Mills Sisters, the famous Islander ladies who perform at concerts all over the Torres Straits and who sang and danced at the opening of the Wilderness Lodge in 1986.

The trip home revealed basking sharks and lots of turtles in the water. We dive bombed the Lodge fishing boat but couldn't tell if they had caught enough for our dinner that night.

The last 2 days were planned to be spent catching up on birds we hadn't seen or going down to the Jardine River. On Wednesday afternoon, while watching greater frigate birds fly towards St Adolphus Island, I saw the Cairns cruise boat, the "Queen of the Isles" set sail for home and pass down the Albany Passage.

On Thursday, George Harding and I left at 8.30 am for a day's fishing on the Jacky Jacky with Gary Wright, the Lodge fishing guide. On the way we saw dingoes run across the road.

The punt fishing boats are launched from a small muddy ramp near the end of the airport runway. One motors out through still estuaries until the enormous inlet is reached. While trolling up one side suddenly Gary shouted, "There he is!" I looked around to see an enormous grey great-billed heron flying slowly along the edge of the mangroves, then turn and fly into them. It was the only sighting of the heron that week! He briefly reappeared a few moments later then flew into the mangroves for keeps. Unfortunately George who was on the other side of the inlet, missed a sighting.

We stopped on a sandbar to catch bait with a net and got the best view of waders all week. There were whimbrels and curlews, sharp-tailed sandpipers and bar-tailed godwits, numerous gull-billed terns, terek sandpipers and 2 lovely pied oyster-catchers.

Soon we were casting for barramundi among the snags underneath the mangroves, using live mullet. I managed to hook 2 large barra but they jumped off the line very easily. This is just as well as the barra season did not reopen until 1st February and we would have had to throw them back.

While eating lunch we had our lines baited up. Suddenly I mine moved! I grabbed it and after a short but uneven fight I hauled aboard my first catch - a golden grunter - which Gary said was quite good eating.

George had been hauling in a lot which he had to throw back, and at one stage he got a very nice fish into the boat which, with Gary's help, managed to escape not once but twice. While trawling again, I caught a small mackerel, then George made the catch of the day - a fighting Queenfish which nearly dragged him out of the boat and had me running for cover.

Our final catch, which George generously shared with me was a Fingermark Red Bream, an excellent eating fish. I hope to try it soon.

Back at the Lodge chef Toni had baked us a special Riflebird cake for our last night. How thoughtful!

On the way to the airport we saw plenty of palm cockatoos. While the plane had a brief stop-over at Lockhart River we were hoping a flock of eclectus parrots might fly down and perch on the fence for us. No such luck!

Back in Cairns Peter soon found the laughing gull for us on the Esplanade. The handful who remained then went down to the Edmonton turf farm where we had excellent view of yellow wagtails and red-rumped swallows. What a way to end a marvellous week of birdwatching.

In conclusion I should mention the amount of work Gordon put in to make sure we were satisfied birdos (drat that pitta!) Also Peter, Lloyd and Klaus just couldn't do enough, from sketching in and signing our field guides, to leading night walks, to driving us to the hide at 5.30 am. The manager, Mark Savage-Morton and his staff did everything to fit in with our ridiculously early and late schedules.

I think the final story must be of the group who were searching all day for the white-faced robin. Ray Crooke, the artist, had fallen a little way behind the rest. When he rejoined them he showed them a sketch of a bird and asked Peter what it was. Of course 10 bird watchers trotted off down the track at great speed in the direction from which Ray had come. He had done a perfect little sketch of the white-faced robin!

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Where to find birds in Australia by John Bransbury  
(Hutchinson, Australia: 1987 rrp \$35.00)



a review by Dawn Magarry

Before Planning a long or short trip, to gather all the information contained in this publication would take many hours, but here it is all in one compact volume.

Each section not only avises of birds to be found, but also at what time of year, whether to look high or low, what weather to expect, points of interest in the area, habitats and more.

All you would need for a trip is now in this book - your field guide and road map.

Only local knowledge can help you find all the 'good spots'. The information contained regarding our area is spot on, except there is no mention of Georgetown, where the Naturalists go every Easter to see approximately 150 species

My husband and I have been travelling and birdwatching for many years now and how we wished for something like John Bransbury's book when we first started out.

As one of our club members said: "I wish I had the money to start on page 1".





Near our house on the Atherton Tablelands is a small clump of trees and here in various locations amid the branches, a pair of Willie Wagtails successfully reared several consecutive broods. Whenever a new batch of fledglings would leave the nest, they would be escorted by their parents to our lawn, where, seated around the rim of the bird bath, they would call encouragement as the older birds chased insects or searched for spiders around the patio.

In the immediate area of the house there are only isolated or small clumps of trees left in the paddocks to shade the dairy cows, a situation not normally favoured by Black Butcher Birds although they are common enough in the larger patches of scrub. So when one crashed into our lounge window when attempting a short cut through the house, the surprise was mutual. In the period after its impromptu visit, it would call occasionally to have a dip in the bird bath, but I gave it no encouragement as the finches that frequented the area would not, I am sure, approve of that sort of company.

The Wagtails meanwhile, were once again busy raising a brood, and when the agitated chatter of the adult birds drew my attention to their nest site, it was to see a Butcher Bird flying off with a chick in its beak. Over the next two days it made several more visits, which despite the valiant defence of the parents, resulted each time in the loss of yet another chick until they were all gone.

This unhappy experience decided the Wagtails to move to a new, hopefully safer site and they commenced to build this nest on the low branch of a bushy scrub tree, well out in the cow paddock. But they were not to be left in peace and soon after their nest was completed I heard the familiar chatter as they challenged the intruder. Once again on my approach the black marauder flew out of the tree with a chick held in its bill, but this time I was sure that it could not be a Wagtail that was the victim. A search showed the Wagtails' nest had three eggs in it, but also revealed the fragile nest of a pair of Peaceful Doves with one young still in it.

The next day when I heard the scolding tones of the Wagtails I knew the cause and arrived in time to see the Butcherbird depart with remaining Dove. But this time it was not carried in the beak of the Butcher Bird, but in its claws. I am well aware that a number of birds such as Parrots and Woodswallows use their claws to carry food to their beaks, but I had until now believed carrying prey in this manner was the prerogative of the raptors. But regardless of the method of transport used, two plump squabs were not enough to satiate the appetite of the Butcherbirds and soon the Wagtails' eggs were gone and the nest itself torn to pieces.

But the Wagtails lost no time grieving over their loss and within a few days had started a nest on the branch of an orange tree in our garden. There was no sign of the Black Butcher Bird until the chicks were nearly fledged, then it came and regardless of harassment from the parent birds, took the chicks one by one, until no more were left. This nest was also torn apart, and while I never saw the Butcher Bird in the act of destroying either nest, the second was so conveniently placed for good observation, it is hard to imagine it being done by any other agency. The reason for this is anyone's guess; pure avian vandalism, perhaps.

At the moment the Wagtails have returned to their original nesting site and are trying once more to raise a family. I wish them every success, for it is a long time since we had a family group of little rump-twitching, black and white flycatchers pay us a visit.

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CAIRNS NATURALISTS VISIT FITZROY ISLAND by Sybil Kimmins

On Sunday October 11 1987, club members settled for a relaxing boat trip to Fitzroy Island. During the trip over and back, 18 species of birds were seen. The elegant Torres Strait Pigeon, in his immaculate white coat with black trim, was a favourite, but an Osprey, a Brahminy Kite and an Eastern Golden Plover were also popular sightings. Others observed were Whimbrels, Bar-Tailed Godwits, Silver Gulls, Terns: Little, Crested, Lesser Crested, Caspian and Gull Billed. Also spotted from the boat were Pelicans, Rainbow Lorikeets, Yellow Fig Birds, Helmeted Friarbirds, Black Kites and Mynahs.

Near the camping area on the beach, a number of Barringtonia calyptrata were blooming, their long racemes of white flowers attracting butterflies. These included the Ulysses, Common Crow and Blue Triangle.

After morning tea, most of the party decided to walk to the lighthouse. This proved to be an enjoyable walk on the steeply undulating cement tracks winding under shady native trees most of the way. Golden toned skinks, Egernia major and possibly Carilia scuttled away under fallen leaves as the walkers approached. Someone spotted a goanna and a Jewel beetle.

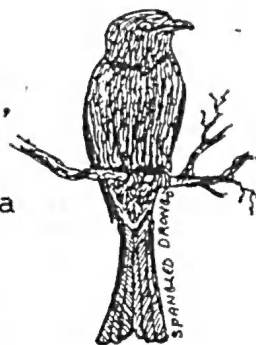
A dead tree pitted with holes of about 1 cm diameter, was evidently the work of Carpenter Bees, one being seen nearby. A sunbird had its nest on a low branch of a Eucalypt, not far above the heads of the walkers.

Before the track ascended the hill, some young specimens of Deplanchea tetraphylla spread their huge leaves and the Sea Lettuce tree, (Scaevola taccada) provided shelter for a Green-wing Pigeon. Casuarina equisetifolia grew at the edge of the sand, its sparse shade a contrast to the bushy, broad-leaved Dillenia alata which scattered yellow flowers over the ground. Hoya australis climbed over some trees; the blue berries of Dianella laevis showed among the grass. Persoonia falcata and Glochidion ferdinandi were also noted.

Glorious vistas of the bright blue Pacific were enjoyed as the track rose higher. A mass of Bulbophyllum baileyi on a fallen tree was a surprise sighting. Golden orchids (Dendrobium discolor) were also seen.

As the track reached exposed high ridges, a dramatic change in the flora was noticed. Casuarinas were small but heavily laden with cones; shrubby plants with small leaves were dominant, including acacias with finger-shaped white flowers; also hop bush (Dodonaea).

Birds seen on the island included the Little Shrike Thrush, Dusky Honeyeater, Shining Starlings, Mistletoe Bird, Drongo, Grey Swiftlets, Varied Triller, Black Faced Cuckoo Shrike, Grey Goshawk, Scrub Fowl, Rainbow Bird, Sulphur-Crested Cockatoo, Rainbow Pitta, Reef Heron, Leaden Flycatcher and a Golden Bronze Cuckoo was heard.



After lunch and a swim, the party was content to watch the forested hills and the mangroves as they sailed back to the city.

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YOUR GARDEN BIRDS by Ellen M. McCulloch  
published by Hyland House RRP \$19.95

reviewed by Dawn Magarry and Margaret Vale.

Ellen McCulloch's many year's patient observation of birds and their habits are brought together in this delightful book. It contains many colourful photos and a lot of useful information for the bird lover.

Each very aptly named chapter encourages the reader to explore their own garden, be it in town or in the country, with new eyes. For example the chapter "Casual Acquaintances" talks about the appearance, call and behaviour of the Yellow Oriole, so prevalent in the north at present, as well as the unfortunately renamed Bush Thick-knee (Stone Curlew) whose mournful call we all hear at night.

All through the book are snippets of information not always found in regular bird guides.

"Some of the cockatoos react to rain in a manner which leaves the onlooker in no doubt of their enjoyment. Galahs and Sulphur-crested Cockatoos have been recorded swinging upside down on wires during a shower, spreading their wings open and shaking them so that the raindrops purl off in a spray."

A very large number of birds is discussed from "Saucy Silvereyes" to "City Slickers", (Feral Pigeons). Most birds are discussed in the context of what food or plants will attract them to your garden: "(A Lewin's Honeyeater) is not shy, and likes fruit - bananas and apples especially".

There are hints on how to watch birds, how to increase the number of species in your garden and where to find further information. It is a book you can study from cover to cover, or simply dip into for a few minutes quiet reading. It would be a lasting gift for the housebound, and to those who are more mobile, an inducement to look further afield at the fascinating world of birds.



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## OBITUARY

Early this year our Club was saddened to learn of the death of one of our most respected members, Ray Straatman. During his years with the club Ray contributed many articles to our Journal and spoke on numerous occasions at Club meetings on his favourite subject - butterflies.

He was always willing to impart his vast knowledge to anyone interested. He was in great demand as a lecturer overseas and his work was widely published.

(contributed)

## RAINFOREST ODYSSEY..

By Gloria Pearce.



Meeka, Maria, Ceri and I set out for the Chambers Holiday Cottages near Lake Eacham, on the Atherton Tablelands, in May 1987. Loaded in the car were binoculars, torches, including a miners spot light, (a new addition to the North Queensland Naturalists Club), raincoats and sturdy shoes. This was quite a contrast from the coast we had just come from where it was still warm enough for summer clothing.

On arriving at our destination, our host met us with a warm welcome, helping us to move into the lovely high set house which was nestled into the rainforest. This was to be ours for three perfect days. The dwelling also had an open loft above, reached by a ladder. This was ideal for spotting birds and animals from under shelter. While we were unpacking, our host again arrived with bread to entice the animals and birds, that lived around the house, and reference books if we needed them. Of the furniture in the house, what I appreciated most was the huge dining table, large enough to take our many books, and still leave plenty of room for us to eat.

We lost no time in setting out bird watching, our host going with us to point out the attractions on his vast rainforest property. We saw a flock of King Parrots feeding in the Wild Tobacco Trees, the brilliant red of the males like a flash of fire. Scrub Turkeys were common, and a Willie Wagtail was cheekily observing us. A Spectacled Monarch came into view with its vivid orange breast. We saw so many birds and could already see our stay here would be worthwhile.

Late in the afternoon, we threw scraps of bread out from the verandah, and immediately about fifteen Scrub Turkeys dashed out and didn't take long to clean up every bit. We set out some Paw Paw on the verandah rail, and a Lewins Honeyeater very quickly appeared on the scene, he was very unafraid and appeared often during our stay.

After dark we again threw out some bread, and were delighted when two White-Tailed Rats (*Uromys caudimaculatus*) came in to feed.



### PLANTS IDENTIFIED

Birds Nest Ferns(*Asplenium australasicum*)  
Birds Nest Ferns(*Asplenium simplicifrons*)  
Cunjevoi (*Alocasia macrorrhiza*)  
Wild Ginger ( *Alpinia caerulea*)  
Giant Fern ( *Angiopteris evecta*)  
Climbing Pandanas(*Freycinetia excelsa*)  
Hoya (*Hoya australis*)  
*Rhaphidophora australasica*  
Fern (*Dicranopteris linearis*)  
Yellow Mistletoe(*Amyema Queenslandicum*)  
Fern ( *Selaginella longipinna*)  
Stinging Tree(*Denerocnide moroides*)  
Common Tree Fern(*Cyathea rebecca*)  
Umbrella Tree(*Schefflera actinophylla*)

### BIRD LIST OF LAKE EACHAM AREA

Rufous Shrike Thrush	Sulphur Crested Cockatoo
Atherton Scrub Wren	Mountain Thornbill
Pied Monarch	Black Duck
Little Grebe	Dusky Moorhen
Coot	Pelican
Black Kite	Dusky Honeyeater
Mackleays Honeyeater	Little White-throated Treecreeper
Graceful Honeyeater	Golden Whistler
Red Browed Finches and juvenile	Maggie Lark
Tooth-billed Catbird	Pied Currawong
Crimson Rosella	Rainbow Lorrikeets
King Parrots	Pale Yellow Robin
Brown Pigeon	Scrub Turkey
Lewin's Honeyeater	Grey Fantail
Straw Necked Ibis(6fly over)	Fan-tailed Cuckoo
Grey-headed Robin	Spectacled Monarch
Willie Wagtail	Eastern Whipbird
Silver Eye	Spotted Catbird
Victorian Riflebird	Brown Warbler

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Also seen were..... Red-legged Pademelon  
Black Snake  
White-tailed Rat  
Northern Great Barred Frog  
Canetoad  
Common Ringtail Possums  
Herbert River Ringtail Possum  
Brush-tailed Possum(northern form)  
Leaf-tailed Gecko

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### EDITORS NOTE

This edition of 'The North Queensland Naturalist' was prepared by Ceri Pearce, Margaret Vale & Stela Murphy. Many thanks to Ceri for being Editor over the last several years. Thanks to all above for typing and to Gloria Pearce for artwork.

Also please note edition 188 preceded 187

BIRD SMALL BUT BOLD.

Bird small but bold  
With an ack - ack gun piercing the rustling quietness,  
Hurtles his way through the thick, primeval dimness,  
With pride to hold  
His territory secure at ack - ack point  
And loudly proclaim to all, "This is my joint!"

Bird small but bold,  
Flits from the mosaic of tangled green  
Where many wild creatures can live, unseen.  
His charms enfold  
The hearts of admirers in his grey - brown breast.  
(He could use my hat, if he wished, for a nest!)

Bird bold but small,  
Surprises uninitiated people  
When dropping from the forests steeple,  
With his loud call.  
Little Lewin Honeyeater at the picnic spot,  
Demands we share our lunch with him. Shy? No, HE IS NOT!



by Sybil J. Kimmins.



North Queensland Naturalists Club Activities: July to December 1988

- July 10 Sun Outing Lake Morris  
12 Tues Meeting  
22-23-24 Camp at Mount Mulligan via Dimbulah
- Aug 7 Sun Outing Babinda Boulders  
9 Tues Meeting  
20-21 Camp at Mount Lewis
- Sept 10-11 Sat-Sun The Crater (spotlighting Sat night)  
13 Tues Meeting
- Oct 9 Sun Outing Walkamin and Nardello's Lagoon  
11 Tues Meeting
- Nov 5-6 Camp at Noah's Beach, Cape Tribulation (Sat & Sun)  
11 Tues Meeting
- Dec 11 Christmas Breakup at Bernadetto's Farm (Gillies hwy, turn  
left after Farley & Lewis)

MEETINGS ARE HELD AT THE EDUCATION CENTR, CNR MOREHEAD & LAZARUS STS,  
BUNGALOW, COMMENCING AT 8 P.M.

USUAL ASSEMBLY POINT FOR OUTINGS IS THE CAIRNS CITY LIBRARY, LAKE ST.  
AT 7.30 A.M.

